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ABSTRACT

A study analyzed two basal reading series to determine if they depicted realistically the role of the career woman as she exists in society. A list of female careers in the 1989 editions of Houghton-Mifflin and McGraw Hill reading basals for grades 1 to 6 was compared to the career categories of the "United States Bureau of Census, Statistical Abstracts for 1989." Results indicated that: (1) eight of the 40 categories shown in the abstract were comparable; (2) 14 categories indicated a higher percentage in the basals; and (3) 18 categories show a lower percentage. Findings suggest that these basals do not realistically represent women in the contemporary work force. (Four tables of data are included and 30 references are attached.) (RS)

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THE PLACE OF CAREER WOMEN IN THE BASALS

BY

MARY T. LEONDIS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to analyze the 1989 editions of Houghton-Mifflin and McGraw Hill reading basals for Grades 1 to 6 and to determine if they depicted the role of the career woman as she exists in society today. A list of female careers in the basals was gathered and compared to the career categories of the U. S. Bureau of Census, Statistical Abstract for 1989. Conclusions show that eight of the forty career categories shown in the abstract were comparable. Fourteen indicate a higher percentage in the basals and eighteen show a lower percentage. This study concludes that these basals do not realistically represent women in the work force today.

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Although method and philosophy may vary from school to school, and even teacher to teacher, exposure to basal readers is an educational constant for almost every elementary school child. From these sets of readers he derives his first systematic "scholarly" view of the world beyond the classroom, beyond the home, beyond his immediate community of friends, neighbors and relatives. (Stefflre 1969)

Children sit through more than a thousand reading lessons during their elementary school years. While they are gathering the reading skills that will turn them into effective readers, they are also absorbing a good deal of information about life. In story after story, in picture after picture, they will meet many characters who seem to accept and live according to stereotyped notions of male and female behavior. It seems as if thousands of people through these basal readers, are teaching the lesson that the sex of a person should determine what an individual can do. (Shapiro, Kramer and Hunerberg 1981)

Since the late 1960's studies of elementary school basals have resulted in recommendations about sexist stereotypes and the portrayal of family structure. (Stefflre 1969) (Busch 1970) (Frasher and Walker 1972) Sexism was pervasive. Fathers had careers: mothers cleaned, cooked and took care of children. Little boys were imaginative and active: little girls were passive and dependent. Children lived in two-parent households and rarely got into trouble and rarely had to face any major problem.

Schulwitz (1976) found the following types of sexist writing in readers; limited roles for females, negative characteristics attributed to females (incapable of problem solving, dependent on male initiative): a majority of male characters, limited life or occupational goals for girls or women. Women were depicted as nurses, mothers, secretaries, teachers. The portrayal of females was shown as having less than the full range of human interests, traits and capabilities.

Rupley, Garcia and Longnion (1981) examined the 1978 readers and found that there was a trend towards male-female representations in the basal material. This information leads us to believe that since there was an upward trend in male-female representation, there would also be an increase in the role of the career woman represented in the basals.

The occupations for women have become more varied in the recent textbooks. One reason may be that women today have more opportunities to participate in occupations, such as photographer and archaeologist, than they did in the 1960's and the 1970's. At that time women were portrayed only as secretaries, teachers and clerks. (Hymowitz and Weissman 1978).

The increase in career women in the basals has begun. A further attempt to determine if the basal readers of the 1980's are portraying the career woman realistically as they exist in contemporary society is shown as a continuing need.

Children's textbooks which are used in the classrooms today are an effective teaching tool. Girls as well as boys need a role model to follow. They need a person to imitate their life after.

Literature on sex role socialization makes it clear that sex role stereotyping in our society should be analyzed. Children learn sexual stereotypes at an early age and it may be terribly difficult to change their attitudes as they grow. (Howe 1971) It is the publishers responsibility to eliminate sexism from the new editions of the basals and illustrate the career women realistically. According to the statistical abstract of the United States (1989) the total percentage of women employed in the labor force in 1987 was 44.8%. Do the later editions of the basal readers reflect these findings accurately?

HYPOTHESIS

To provide further evidence on this topic, the following study was established. It was hypothesized that elementary basal readers do not realistically portray the career woman as she exists in society today.

DEFINITIONS

Role Model: A person to be imitated or to pattern one's life after.

Sex Stereotyping: The practice of setting rigid designations and expectations to one sex for particular career choices.

Basal Reader: Children's textbooks used to teach reading in the classroom.

Career Woman: A woman who has pursued an occupation or profession as her lifework.

Women's Occupations: The working women as they are employed in the workforce in the 1980's.

ASSUMPTIONS

One assumption is that the basal readers used are a good representation of basals. Another assumption is that there has been a substantial increase in the number of feminine roles in the basals. It is assumed that the basal readers will reveal the occupational status of women.

LIMITATIONS

The study is limited to the examination of two basal reading series from Grades 1-6. Houghton-Mifflin Reading Series and Holt, Rinehart and Winston are both 1989 editions.

PROCEDURES

The subject of this study is limited to women, their careers and their stereotyping as depicted in basal readers.

The basal reading programs of Houghton-Mifflin (1989) and McGraw Hill Co. (1989), Grades 1-6 were studied. A chart of career women as depicted in these publications was created. The U. S. Bureau of Census, Statistical Abstract of the United States 1989 (109th Edition) was utilized to determine the actual statistics on the prevalence of career women in given occupations for the year 1987.

After determining the depiction of the career woman in the basal readers, the results were compared with the statistics of the U. S. Bureau of Census, Statistical Abstract of the United States 1989. This comparison revealed the actual and realistic statistics concerning career women in the work force, as opposed to their portrayal in the basal readers.

RESULTS

Table 1 was prepared to indicate the careers listed in the Statistical Abstract and the percentage of females employed in these professions and jobs. Only those careers from the Statistical Abstract which were found in the basals were listed and classified according to the like careers. The percentage of female characters shown as employed in the Houghton-Mifflin and the McGraw Hill readers were calculated and listed beside the Abstract percentages. A separate listing was made of the Abstract percentages with the combined basal percentage averages to provide a more realistic picture of the career women in the labor force as they actually exist and as they are depicted in the basal readers.

TABLE 1
PERCENTAGES OF STATISTICAL ABSTRACT COMPARED TO BASALS

FEMALE OCCUPATIONS	Statistical Abstract 1987 %	Houghton Mifflin 1989 %	McGraw 1989 %	COMPARISON Abstract Averages %	Combined Basals Averages %
Officials & Admin. in Public Sch.	42	25	17	42	21
Managers, Marketing & Public Rel.	27	50	40	27	45
Admin., Educators&Related Fields	48	33	100	48	67
Professional Specialties	50	17	50	50	34
Architects	13	100	0	50	50
Engineers	7	0	100	7	50
Scientists and Natural Scientists	24	48	19	24	34
Physicians	20	43	40	20	42
Registered Nurses	95	100	100	95	100
Therapists	76	100	100	76	100
Teachers	79	54	54	79	54
Professors	37	0	0	37	0
Librarians	86	100	67	86	84
Religious Workers	47	0	0	47	0
Writers, Artists, Entert.& Athletes	46	37	48	46	43
Technicians	49	33	0	49	17
Computer Programmers	37	67	0	37	34
Sales Occupations	48	67	0	48	34
Supervisors & Proprietors	32	27	25	32	26
Computer Operators	66	33	0	66	17
Secretaries	99	100	100	99	100
Information Clerks	90	0	100	90	50
Receptionists	98	0	50	98	25
Mail & Message Distributors	35	50	0	35	25
Postal Clerks	44	20	0	44	10
Cleaners & Servants	96	0	100	96	50
Police & Detectives	11	50	13	11	32
Food Preparation & Service	62	50	0	62	25
Cooks	50	25	100	50	63
Attendants/Amusement & Recreation	43	67	100	43	84
Construction Trades	2	20	0	2	10
Carpenters	1	0	25	1	13
Factory Mach. Oper, Assembl&Inspect.	41	50	0	41	25
Textile & Sewing Machines Oper.	91	100	0	91	50
Fabric,Assemb.&Handworking Oper.	33	33	0	33	17
Transport Occup.,Except Mot Vehicles	2	0	44	2	22
Farm Operators & Managers	15	25	46	15	36
Other Agricultural Occupations	17	13	0	17	7
Forestry	6	100	0	6	50
Fishers, Hunters & Trappers	9	20	0	9	10
[40 Categories/73+ Occupations]					

The Statistical Abstract of the United States 1988 was compared to the careers of women in the Houghton Mifflin (1989) and McGraw Hill (1989) basal readers. The combined average of the basal readers corresponded to forty career categories and seventy three and more occupations of the Statistical Abstract.

Eight of these forty career categories displayed a comparable percentage of women's careers in the actual work force. By comparable we mean a difference of 0 to 10%. Fourteen of the forty career categories indicate a higher percentage of women's careers in the basal readers as compared to the Abstract. Eighteen of the categories indicate a lower percentage of women's careers in the basals.

TABLE 2
COMPARABLE PERCENTAGES OF WOMEN'S CAREERS IN BASALS

FEMALE OCCUPATIONS	COMPARISON	
	Abstract Average %	Combined Basals Averages %
Architects	50	55
Registered Nurses	50	50
Librarians	86	84
Writers, Artists, Entertain. & Athletes	46	43
Computer Programmers	37	34
Secretaries	99	100
Mail & Message Distribution	35	25
Fishers, Hunters & Trappers	9	10

Table 2 indicates the comparable percentage of women's careers in the basals. Under the comparable categories are found architects, registered nurses, librarians, writers, artists, entertainers, athletes, computer programmers, secretaries, mail and message distributors, fishers, hunters and trappers.

TABLE 3
HIGHER PERCENTAGES OF WOMEN'S CAREERS IN BASALS

FEMALE OCCUPATIONS	COMPARISON	
	Abstract Average %	Combined Basals Averages %
SECTION ONE: Five or more times higher than the actual.		
Engineers	7	50
Construction Trades	2	10
Carpenters	1	13
Transport. Occupations Except Motor Vehicles	2	22
Forestry	6	50
SECTION TWO: Three or more times higher than the actual.		
Police & Detectives	11	32
SECTION THREE: One or more times higher than the actual.		
Managers, Marketing & Public Relations	27	45
Administrators, Educators and Related Fields	48	67
Scientists and Natural Scientists	24	34
Physicians	20	42
Therapists	76	100

TABLE 3 (continued)
HIGHER PERCENTAGES OF WOMEN'S CAREERS IN BASALS

Cooks	50	63
Attendants/Amusement & Recreation	43	84
Farm Operator & Managers	15	36

The higher percentage of women's careers in the basals is shown in Table 3. This category is divided into three sections. The first section indicates that the basals show an increase of five times or more than the Abstract. The second section indicates an increase of three to four times the Abstract. The third indicates an increase of 1 to 2 times the actual.

Under the first section (five times or more than the actual) fall the categories of engineers, construction trades, carpenters, transportation occupations except for motor vehicle and forestry. The basals average in these careers far exceeds the actual careers of women in the work force. The average basal shows an increase of five to eight times more than the actual work force as indicated in the Abstract. This leads one to conclude that both these basals overstate these careers for women.

The second section (three to four times the actual) includes only police and detectives. The figures are unrealistic, since the basals show three times more women police and detectives than those that actually exist.

The third section (one to two times the actual) includes managers, marketing, public relations, administrators, educators and related fields, scientists, natural scientists, physicians, therapists, cooks, attendants for amusement and recreation, farm operators and managers. These figures are more realistic than the first two sections, since the basals are not that far removed from the actual careers.

TABLE 4
LOWER PERCENTAGES OF WOMEN'S CAREERS IN BASALS

FEMALE OCCUPATIONS	COMPARISON	
	Abstract Average %	Combined Basal Averages %
SECTION ONE: Five or more times lower than the actual.		
Professors	37	0
Religious Workers	47	0
SECTION TWO: Three or more times lower than the actual		
Technicians	49	17
Computer Operators	66	17
Receptionists	98	25
Postal Clerks	44	10
SECTION THREE: One or two times lower than the actual.		
Officials and Administrators in Public Schools	42	21
Professional Specialties	50	34
Teachers	79	54
Sales Occupations	48	34

TABLE 4 (continued)
LOWER PERCENTAGES OF WOMEN IN THE BASALS

Supervisors & Proprietors	32	26
Information Clerks	90	50
Cleaners & Servants	96	50
Food Preparation & Service	62	25
Factory Machine Oper./Assembl. & Inspectors	41	25
Textile Sewing Machine	91	50
Fabric Assembly & Handworking Operators	33	17
Other Agricultural Occupations	17	7

Table 4 indicates the lower percentage of the women's careers in the basals. Career categories where basals indicate a lower percentage of women as compared to the Statistical Abstract were placed under the category of lower percentage. This has also been divided into three sections. The first section indicates that the basals show a decrease of five times or more than the Abstract. The second section indicates a decrease of three to four times the Abstract. The third indicates a decrease of 1 to 2 times the actual.

The first section (five or more times lower than the actual) includes professors and religious workers. Neither were portrayed in the basals.

The second section (three to four times less than the actual) include technicians, computer operator, receptionists and postal clerks.

The basal readers show an obvious disproportionate low average for some of these categories.

The third section (one to two times less than the actual) include officials and administrators in public schools, professional specialties, teachers, sales occupations, supervisors, proprietors, information clerks, cleaners, servants, food preparation and service, factory machine operators, assembly and inspectors, textile and sewing machine operators, factory, assembly and hand working operators and other agricultural occupations. These occupations do not indicate as great a difference as the two former sections.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study appear to support the hypothesis that the 1989 editions of the Houghton-Mifflin and McGraw Hill basal readers, do not realistically portray the career woman as she exists in the work force today.

In the comparable category eight of these forty careers are representative of actual women in the work force. A mere 20% is comparable to actuality. This shows the significant influence the basals have in the stereotyping of career choices and aspirations.

The higher percentage of women's careers in the basals than in the actual work force, leads one to conclude that both of the basals used in the study overstate these careers for women. 35% of the career categories show a higher rate of women in these particular fields. The reason for this exaggeration may be to encourage women to enter into

these fields where their numbers are low in actuality. In the second section the basals show three times more women as police and detectives than those that actually exist. This may serve the purpose of supporting young ladies to pursue these careers. This also would encourage adventurous young ladies to enter into more daring and exciting careers than the duller stereotyped. Section three, where a difference of one or two times more women careers are portrayed than the actual, are a little more in in line with actuality.

Consideration must be given to the fact that the higher percentage of women careers in the basals may have as a purpose to encourage young women to pursue a greater variety of careers which may have been stereotyped in the past for males.

The lower percentage of careers for women portrayed in the basals is unrealistic. 40% of these careers categories show a lower rate of women in these fields. The first section shows no female professors or religious workers. There are many female professor as well as nuns and female ministers in the work force. The absence of female professors may be due to the fact that more children are depicted in the stories than adults. In which case, teachers would be shown working with young children instead of professors. The elimination of the religious may be due to the separation of church and state, but if so, is dubious thinking at best..

The second section is unrealistic since there are many more women in these fields of technicians, computer operators, receptionists

and postal clerks than the basals show. This again is an oversight of the basal publishers.

The third section indicates that females have fewer careers in these fields as depicted in the basals, but in actuality more females are employed in these occupations.

From the results of this comparison, we can conclude that between the Statistical Abstract and the basal readers studied (Houghton-Mifflin and McGraw Hill), elementary basal readers do not realistically portray the career of women as they exist in the work force today. In some fields the women are portrayed in occupations to a lesser degree and in others to a higher degree. The women in the work force is changing as more women seek employment, as well as, the role of homemaker and mother. Since biological differences between male and female capabilities in careers amount to less than one per cent, the basal publishers should portray both sexes performing the same task and seeking the same careers.

It is the responsibility of publishers, school districts and teachers to be aware of the changing lifestyles as they exist in America today. They must strive to choose a basal which depicts various lifestyles and fits the needs of their school population.

Basal readers have given greater attention to the women's place in the work force since the 1960's. The 1980's show a great improvement. The basal publishers in the 1990's should be preparing the next

generation of female career women for the work force of the 21st millennium.

RELATED RESEARCH

By 1995, it is anticipated, that four fifths of American women will be labor force participants. (Robey & Russell, 1984) As women of the 1980's reach the age of entry into the labor force, they are becoming increasingly aware that the traditional "wife and mother" role may no longer be the only career path for the majority to follow.

A number of social and economic factors affect their career decisions. The women's movement has dramatically influenced the expectations that women have for themselves with regard to work outside their home and pursuit of careers. Salary differences and new female role models in careers other than the "pink collar" occupations of secretary, nurse or elementary school teacher affect young women's career plans. (Gernstein, Lichtman and Barokas, 1988).

Educators now view career development as a series of experiences and decisions that begin early in an individual's life and continue through most of their active years. (Parks 1976) Studies done by Tyler (1951), O'Hara (1962), Looft (1971), Iglitzin (1972) and Harkness (1973) have shown conclusively that stereotyping of career roles does occur in children of elementary school age. In fact, stereotyping appeared to have a significant influence on early statements of career choices and aspiration.

Sex-role stereotyping is not determined by biological drives or organ inferiorities. Nor is it a by product of cognitive development.

Sex-role stereotyping is the result of the dynamic sociopsychological situation of the child who is surrounded by forces of culture, like schools, peers, and mass media. Stereotyping is self- perpetuating, culturally induced. Because of this, we can be optimistic about the possibility of changing and influencing it. (Guttentag and Bray 1976)

Guttentag and Bray (1976) did a survey on children's attitudes about major concerns which children believe are related to sex roles. The children in their study had little resistance to occupational roles for women such as bus drivers, doctors and mail deliverers. They told stories about women with low status roles (working in a gas station rather than being head mechanic), women who were seldom in supervisory positions. Men were presented as quite successful and encountering few obstacles of any sort. Children believed there was great pressure on men. They must work, must earn money, and they have little flexibility in their family and socioemotional roles. Women may have jobs, but are not very good at them. The children believe that women are best at being friendly and caring for people. Men they believe are not good at doing chores around the home or taking care of children. Women are always viewed in relation to the men in their lives. Children in the study believed as long as women continued to do the "womanly" tasks around the house, she could also work at any job. Men's first priority was work and their extra time was spent in traditional male activities like sports.

Results from the study were quite interesting and provided important information about change in children's sex-role stereotyping useful for educators. The findings supported the following generalizations. Sex-role attitudes are hard to change in children of all ages. Children are generally nonsexist about themselves. Children are somewhat sexist about same–sexed peers. Children are very sexist about opposite-sexed peers. Kindergartners can learn to be occupationally nonsexist. Girls are trying to create life styles that integrate home and career. Boys generally disregard nonsexist values. The children feel the male's role is tight, while the female's role is more flexible.

A little intervention may be dangerous: strong intervention can have powerful positive effects. These findings provide strong support for the potential effectiveness of nonsexual intervention within the schools for children of any age.

While there is still debate today whether or not the current American basal series provide children the opportunity to read nonstereotypical materials, research provided evidence on the topic as early as 1969.

In 1969, Stefflre researched six basal reader series to determine the status of the working women in the basals. He classified each adult woman character according to vocation and marital and maternal status. He compared the women workers to the total number of women

characters in the readers and to the real-life percentages of working women in the United States labor force as determined by the United States Government 1960 census.

Stefflre discovered that forty percent of the adult women in the United States were working as compared to nineteen per cent of the women employed in the basals. The differences between the composition of the women's real labor force and the labor force as shown in the readers is obvious. Comparing the kinds of occupations that women worked at with the same occupations in reality, Stefflre found that the percentage of women working at the professional level is shown to be four times greater than was depicted in the basals. Seven times more women work at factory jobs in reality as compared to women in the basals. Three times more women work at clerical and sales jobs as indicated in elementary readers. In the elementary readers examined 3.3 % of the mothers work. The basals send the message that practically no mothers work and in real life a sizable minority of mothers work.

Frasher and Walker (1972) examined readiness, first and second grade reading textbooks and confirmed Stefflre's (1969) findings. They concluded that women's occupational roles in textbooks were limited, distorted and stereotyped. In the textbooks, female workers were uncommon compared with male workers. Females worked in very few occupations and those that did were rarely married. This did not por-

tray the actual roles and characteristic of the working women, but presented a limited range of occupational opportunity.

In 1972, Diane Graebner examined the question whether school readers reflect a changing female role. She used the 1962-63 and 1971 editions of the Scott Foresman and Company and the 1961-69 editions of the Ginn and Company. She found that there was very little effort to make the activities of males and females any less typed by sex.

The greatest difference between the old and new editions was in the number of occupations for females. In all editions, women were underemployed compared to their rate of employment in the labor market. There was a shift to more varied and frequent employment in the newer books. Women were shown in only five occupations in the old books and in twenty-six in the new ones, an increase of more than 400%. A woman's job, was usually portrayed only once (queen, princess and unmarried teachers excepted). It was seldom that women's occupations were at all unusual.

The school readers changed slightly over the sixties, but they still did not approach reality. The narrow stereotypes imposed a severe limitation on the goals and aspirations of girls at a most critical and impressionable period of their lives. Nowhere is sex role stereotyping more evident than in elementary school readers. Books that are read at home can be screened by parents. However, books assigned in the

schools are read by all children as mandated by the system. It is therefore incumbent upon the creators of elementary school reading books to be conscious of all varieties of sex role stereotyping. (Oliver 1974) In School Review (February 1972) Jerome Kagan wrote: "it is important to note that biological differences do not place serious constraints on the kinds of vocational and social roles men and women should assume in society. Even if a small proportion of occupations, probably less than 1 %, is biologically better suited to one sex, most roles in Western society can probably be filled with competence by men or women."

Women on Words and Images (1975) updated a previous study, and conducted an analysis of eighty-three readers from nine major publishers. They concluded that the major shortcoming of these books was the male-female ratios. New stories had been added by the publishers, however, an imbalance still existed. This is apparent in the following ratios:

Boy-centered stories to girl-centered stories	7:2
Male illustrations to female illustrations	2:1
Male occupations to female occupations	3:1
Male biographies to female biographies	2:1

Although women were shown in a wider variety of occupations, as compared to men, for the most part they were seen in the job of unimaginative mother. (Krenak and Rosamilia, 1984)

In the 1980's it was still a point of debate as to whether the children had an opportunity to read non-stereotypical materials. According to Tibbets (1978) most studies examining sexist content produced evidence that such conduct was still generally sexist. They concluded that the content was harmful to both boys and girls and effected the way they viewed themselves.

Britton and Lumpkin (1977) hypothesized that basal readers published in 1974-76 would have decreased in sexist content in comparison to readers published in 1958-70. The researchers reviewed basal texts published in these years and concluded that "changes have been minimal." However, since texts written with a 1976 copyright were most likely begun in the early 1970's an examination of more current material was done by Rupley, Garcia and Longnion (1981).

Basal series published in 1976 were analyzed separately, as were those published in 1978. The researchers found that in 1976, there was a cut in male representation in the story. But in 1978 results showed that there was an almost equal number of male and female characters in these basals. There was an attempt to portray males and females

equally in story content. No statistics of female occupations were included in the study.

While the above studies do indicate some progress in equalization of male and female representation in basal material, several of the studies indicate that the nature of feminine activities has not changed substantially and that textbooks imply that independence, initiative, strength and ambition are exclusively male traits. (Hartman and Judd, 1978) (Martin and Matlin, 1976) (Schulwitz, 1976)

Britton and Lumpkin (1983) did a study of six major basal reading series. They examined main characters and role models carefully and summarized that there has been an increased numerical representation for women. There has, however, been very little progress for females in children's texts.

In order for a child to develop a sexual identity, they need to relate to a variety of adult role models in children's literature. "Interpersonal and work roles for both sexes should reflect what is as well as what should be. For example, women characters would be engineers, doctors, reporters, scientists, taxi drivers, letter carriers, secretaries, teachers, nurses and store clerks as well as mothers, aunts, sisters and daughters. On the other hand men would be nurses, teachers, secretaries, cooks, waiters, store clerks, lawyers, mechanics and carpenters as well as fathers, uncles, brothers and sons." (Kyle, 1978)

Shapiro, et al, as a result of their work indicated that people should stop classifying books by gender. If they do not think of books as boys or girls' books, they can recommend them according to the needs of each student instead of the gender of the reader.

Books and articles on women's history or biographies of famous women, should be routinely assigned for all children to read. If books have females as the main character or show women in non-traditional roles, boys and girls will recognize that daring, adventurousness and courage are not limited only to males.

Books that offer a sex-fair approach merit special attention. They offer a view of females as being strong, capable and assertive people who do interesting things. They may be shown as daring, inquisitive, interested in meeting problems and having lofty goals. Children in many instances, simply accept these gender-free materials, but through discussions these books can strengthen female images and have an impact far beyond the book itself. (Shapiro, Kramer and Hunerberg 1981)

Since basal readers are used extensively throughout the United States they must be developed and continually evaluated with an understanding of all the learnings--overt and incidental--that they may produce.

In the late 1970's and early 1980's, research was done on changes in women's occupational plans toward careers traditionally dominated

by men. (Herzog, 1982) (Lueptow, 1981) (Snyder, Hayward and Hudist 1978) (Wagenaar 1983) A study done by Gerstein, Lichtman, and Barokas (1988) on the trend of adolescent women's occupational planning was formulated.

Data used was collected from two surveys developed by the Center for Statistics. The National Longitudinal Study of the High School Class of 1972 (Levinsohn, Lewis, Riccobanno and Moore, 1976) surveyed over 20,000 high school seniors. The High School and Beyond (Frankel, Kohuke, Buonanno and Tourangeau, 1981) surveyed 28,000 in 1980. In the 1972 survey seniors were asked what kind of work they would like to do and what kind of careers they would pursue. In the 1980 study seniors were asked to indicate the job or occupation they expect to have when they are thirty years old.

In 1972, 20.5% of the women planned to enter the professional one category (accountant, architect, artist, engineer, nurse and social worker). In 1980, 29.4% of the women planned to enter these same fields. This indicates a percentage increase of 8.9%.

In 1972, 7.8% of the women expected to become attorneys, college professors, dentists, physicians or scientists. In 1980 the percentage was 13.7%, an increase of 5.9π%. The largest percentage increase for women was in the the professional one category. The largest percentage decrease was in the clerical sales and in the teacher categories. These

are realistic figures and the kind of world we should present to young readers through their basal readers.

These figures indicate that there have been greater opportunities for women to participate in professional occupations today, than they did in the 1970's.

Publishers have begun to tackle the problem of eliminating the sexism that exists in basal readers. Many have prepared guidelines to help their authors and editors avoid sexist attitudes and language. In some of the newer editions a greater number of stories about females are being included. The activities and adventures of both boys and girls will enable children to read about males and females functioning in a less restricted world.

However, since replacement of basal series is always a slow and costly procedure, it may be some time before old material is completely replaced with newer non-sexist materials. The ultimate responsibility still lies with the classroom teacher to neutralize the effects of sexism. Teachers need to be sensitive to the sexist messages in the books and materials they are using. They need to weave the consciousness into the every day learnings that take place in the classroom. In working with a reading group, as children read the story, the stereotyped ways in which boys and girls are shown in stories needs to be identified and explored.

Fortunately, it would appear, the classroom teacher can make the difference in how children relate to basal reader stories.

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